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DEPT FOR AF/W
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LONDON FOR YOUNG
PARIS FOR MORAN

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SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: JAMMEH DIGS IN DEEPER

11. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

SUMMARY

12. CHAIRMAN JAMMEH REMAINS UNMOVED BY SENEGALESE AND WESTERN DONOR CONCERNS FOR RETURN TO DEMOCRACY AND ATTENTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE GAMBIA. HIS INTRANSIGENCE HAS BEEN BUOYED BY HIS PERCEPTION THAT WORLD BANK ASSISTANCE WILL BE UNAFFECTED BY WITHDRAWAL OF BILATERAL AND EU ASSISTANCE. STRONG SUPPORTERS OF A QUICK RETURN TO DEMOCRACY IN THE CABINET HAVE NOT BEEN HEARD, AND THE STRONGEST ADVOCATE FOR DEMOCRACY, FINANCE MINISTER DABO, MAY NOW BE VULNERABLE. THE PRC ITSELF IS LOSING COHERENCE AND BECOMING DISTANT FROM ITS SOLDIERS. END SUMMARY.

JAMMEH: A TIMETABLE WHEN AND HOW WE WANT IT

13. AMBASSADOR WINTER, SENEGALESE HIGH COMMISSIONER MOCTAR KEBBE, BANJUL EU DELEGATE ROBERT COLLINGWOOD, AND ACTING BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER RICHARD AUSTEN MET AT SHC'S RESIDENCE OCTOBER 6, 1994, FOR THE WEEKLY MEETING OF THE TROIKA-PLUS -- ENVOYS OF THE U.S., SENEGAL, AND UK PLUS THE EU DELEGATE. THE MOOD WAS SOMBER AND RESIGNED BUT CORDIAL.

14. SHC KEBBE OPENED DISCUSSION BY REPORTING HIS MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN JAMMEH MONDAY OCTOBER 3, 1994. SHC DELIVERED A DEMARCHE FROM SENEGALESE PRESIDENT DIOUF UNDERSCORING THAT SENEGAL CONSIDERED THE GAMBIA A PRIORITY. TO THAT END, PRESIDENT DIOUF HAD DIRECTED THAT SENEGAL'S DELEGATES TO MINISTERIAL-LEVEL WORKING GROUPS FOCUSING ON SENEGAL-GAMBIA COMMERCE, TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, AND IMMIGRATION EXPEDITE THEIR NEGOTIATIONS. GIVEN THE PRIORITY OF THE GAMBIA FOR SENEGAL, PRESIDENT DIOUF WAS COMPELLED TO EXPRESS THREE URGENT CONCERNS:

- THE PRC'S DETERIORATING PERFORMANCE REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS;
- THE NEED FOR QUICK ANNOUNCEMENT OF A TIMETABLE FOR RETURN TO DEMOCRACY; AND
- THE NEED FOR THE GAMBIA TO MAINTAIN POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH AID DONORS.

15. SHC REPORTED THAT CHAIRMAN JAMMEH HAD ONLY RESPONDED TO THE ISSUE OF A TIMETABLE FOR RETURN TO DEMOCRACY. CHAIRMAN JAMMEH HAD RETORTED THAT NO ONE WOULD IMPOSE A TIMETABLE ON THE GAMBIA, AND THAT THE PRC'S ANTI-CORRUPTION PROGRAM WOULD TAKE TIME TO ACCOMPLISH. WHEN SHC ASKED IF THE TIMETABLE WOULD FOLLOW PRESIDENT DIOUF'S RECOMMENDATION OF A MAXIMUM

OF FIFTEEN MONTHS TO ELECTIONS, CHAIRMAN JAMMEH AGAIN ANSWERED THAT IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO RECOVER THE MONEY STOLEN UNDER THE JAWARA GOVERNMENT.

JAMMEH THINKS THE WORLD BANK DOESN'T CARE

¶6. CHAIRMAN JAMMEH INDICATED TO SHC THAT WORLD BANK COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER LUCY KEOUGH HAD INFORMED HIM THAT THE WORLD BANK WOULD NOT BASE ITS DECISION TO MAINTAIN ASSISTANCE TO THE GAMBIA ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES OR THE TIMETABLE, BUT WAS INSTEAD PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH THE GAMBIA'S WILL TO HONOR ITS COMMITMENTS TO THE WORLD BANK AND ITS ABILITY TO MANAGE WORLD BANK PROGRAMS PROPERLY. CHAIRMAN JAMMEH TOOK THESE STATEMENTS AS EVIDENCE THAT WORLD BANK ASSISTANCE WAS NOT DEPENDENT ON PRC ACTION TO EXPEDITE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A TIMETABLE OR TO ADDRESS INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS.

DABO -- AND MAYBE OTHER MINISTERS -- ARE IN TROUBLE

¶7. CHAIRMAN JAMMEH HAD ALSO OBSERVED THAT THERE WERE SABOTEURS AMONG HIS TEAM (PRESUMABLY THE CABINET) WHO WANTED THE GNA TO RETURN TO BARRACKS QUICKLY. HE AGAIN AFFIRMED THAT THE PRC HAD NOT TAKEN POWER TO RETURN THE GAMBIA'S GOVERNMENT TO A (CORRUPT)

¶8. SHC WAS CONCERNED THAT FINANCE MINISTER DABO WAS AMONG THE QUOTE SABOTEURS UNQUOTE MENTIONED BY CHAIRMAN JAMMEH, IN PART BECAUSE FINMIN DABO HAS CONSISTENTLY INFORMED THE PRC THAT PROGRESS TOWARD RETURN TO DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE WERE ESSENTIAL TO PRESERVE WORLD BANK ASSISTANCE. SHC BELIEVES THAT FINMIN DABO IS IN DANGER AS A RESULT.

JAMMEH DOESN'T GET IT

¶9. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS WERE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE, WHICH WAS A PREREQUISITE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF WORLD BANK ASSISTANCE. AMBASSADOR ALSO OBSERVED THAT CHAIRMAN JAMMEH HAD NOT GIVEN MS KEOUGH MUCH OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK, AND THAT THE REST OF HER MESSAGE -- THAT GOOD GOVERNANCE ALSO MEANT OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW -- WAS NOT HEARD. WHILE THE WORLD BANK DID NOT ADDRESS POLITICAL ISSUES DIRECTLY, OTHER DONORS -- THE U.S., THE EU, THE UK, AND GERMANY -- DID. WITHDRAWAL OF THESE DONORS WOULD MAKE WORLD BANK PROGRAMS UNMANAGEABLE. MS KEOUGH HAD MADE THE POINT THAT THE WORLD BANK WOULD BE FORCED TO WITHDRAW IF OTHER MAJOR DONORS DID SO. EU DELEGATE COLLINGWOOD CONCURRED THAT CHAIRMAN JAMMEH DID NOT UNDERSTAND HOW THE WORLD BANK WORKED.

THE USAID MISSION IS AT RISK

¶10. AMBASSADOR BRIEFED THE GROUP ON HIS AND USAID REPRESENTATIVE DEPP'S MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN JAMMEH FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1994, REPORTING CHAIRMAN JAMMEH'S INTRANSIGENCE REGARDING THE TIMETABLE AND HIS UNWILLINGNESS TO FOCUS ON MEANS TO CONTINUE U.S. ASSISTANCE TO THE GAMBIA. AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT CHAIRMAN JAMMEH SEEMED OBSESSED BY FORMER PRESIDENT JAWARA. EU DELEGATE COLLINGWOOD OBSERVED THAT CHAIRMAN JAMMEH'S WAS NOW FOCUSED ON JAWARA TO THE EXCLUSION OF INTEREST IN OTHER MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE JAWARA GOVERNMENT. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THE PRC HAS CONSISTENTLY FAILED TO LIVE UP TO ITS OWN COMMITMENTS, ESPECIALLY REGARDING FREEDOM OF SPEECH, THE RULE OF LAW, AND THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD

GOVERNANCE. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT THE PRC HAD FAILED TO OBSERVE ITS OWN ANNOUNCED 45-DAY DEADLINE FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF A TIMETABLE. AMBASSADOR OBSERVED THAT IT WAS BECOMING DIFFICULT TO JUSTIFY KEEPING THE BANJUL USAID MISSION OPEN, AND THAT CLOSING THE USAID MISSION MIGHT BE THE ONLY WAY TO DEMONSTRATE THE URGENCY OF USG CONCERNS TO THE PRC.

THE UK AND EU ARE READY TO CUT AID . . .

¶11. ABHC AUSTEN REPORTED THAT, IN VIEW OF THE DELAYED TIMETABLE AND THE CONTINUING ISSUE OF DETAINEES, THE EU WAS PREPARING AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT IT INTENDED TO SUSPEND BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS ASSISTANCE (NOW APPROX. USDOLS 4 MN/YR) AND WOULD CONSIDER SUSPENDING OTHER ASSISTANCE ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. PROTECTED PROGRAMS WOULD BE THOSE IN HEALTH AND EDUCATION, AND POSSIBLY OTHER SMALL PROGRAMS. ABHC AUSTEN EMPHASIZED THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS STILL BEING REVIEWED, AND ITS FINAL CONTENT REMAINED TO BE SEEN. EU DELEGATE COLLINGWOOD CONFIRMED THIS ACTION. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT UK MILITARY ASSISTANCE WAS SURE TO BE SUSPENDED.

. . . LIBYANS OR NO

¶12. ABHC AUSTEN FURTHER REMARKED THAT THE UK REMAINED CONCERNED THAT CUTTING OFF ASSISTANCE TO THE GAMBIA WOULD DRIVE THE PRC TOWARD UNSAVORY DONORS. EU DELEGATE COLLINGWOOD ANSWERED THAT NONE OF THE OBVIOUS DONORS OF CONCERN (SUDAN, IRAN, IRAQ, OR LIBYQOMMIT TO THE GAMBIA. AMBASSADOR CONCURRED, BUT OBSERVED THAT RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNTS OF ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE ALL THAT WAS REQUIRED FOR THE GAMBIA.

SHC KEBBE WILL TRY AGAIN WITH WADDA

¶13. SHC REPORTED THAT HE WOULD SEE SECRETARY-GENERAL MOUSTAPHA WADDA LATER THE SAME DAY (OCTOBER 6, 1994), AND HE WOULD TRY TO IMPRESS UPON MR. WADDA THE LINKAGE BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN AID AND THAT OF THE WORLD BANK. AMBASSADOR ASKED SHC TO QUERY MR. WADDA REGARDING THE PRC'S MOST RECENT ROUND OF ARBITRARY FIRINGS AND RETIREMENTS AMONG THE GAMBIA'S SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT MR. WADDA HAD HEADED THE GAMBIA'S PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, WHICH HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH ASSURING PROPER PERSONNEL PROCEDURES WERE FOLLOWED IN THE GAMBIA'S CIVIL SERVICE. AMBASSADOR ALSO ASKED SHC'S OPINION OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE M'BAI'S RESPONSE TO THE PRC'S REFUSAL TO RELEASE A TIMETABLE. SHC ANSWERED THAT MR. M'BAI WAS UNLIKELY TO RESIGN.

THE PRC IS DIVIDED AND ISOLATED

¶14. SHC NOTED THAT MINISTER OF DEFENCE SINGHATEH HAD BEEN EXCLUDED FROM PRC DECISION-MAKING, AND WAS NO LONGER AN IMPORTANT VOICE WITHIN THE PRC. SHC EXPLAINED THAT MINDEF SINGHATEH HAD LONG BEEN INTIMATELY ASSOCIATED WITH JAWARA'S SECRETARY-GENERAL JANHA, AND THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY ARRANGED FOR JANHA'S WIFE AND FAMILY -- AS WELL AS HIS HOUSEHOLD GOODS -- TO BE MOVED TO SENEGAL AFTER THE COUP. HE WAS ALSO THE BEST EDUCATED AND MOST INTELLIGENT MEMBER OF THE PRC, WHICH DID NOT ENDEAR HIM TO HIS COLLEAGUES. MINDEF SINGHATEH HAD CONSISTENTLY LOST INFLUENCE SINCE THE COUP. SHC ALSO REPORTED THAT THE REMAINING PRC MEMBERS -- CHAIRMAN JAMMEH, VICE-CHAIRMAN SABALLY, AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR HAIDARA -- WERE CONSTANTLY IN CONFLICT WITH ONE

ANOTHER.

¶15. SHC OBSERVED FURTHER THAT THE PRC WAS LOSING TOUCH WITH THE GAMBIA NATIONAL ARMY. HE POINTED OUT THAT IN NO OTHER COUP IN AFRICA HAD THE LEADERS MOVED INTO THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE (IN CHAIRMAN JAMMEH'S CASE) OR LUXURIOUS PRIVATE HOMES (AS WITH THE OTHER PRC MEMBERS). IN ALL OTHER CASES, COUP LEADERS HAD REMAINED IN BARRACKS WITH THEIR SOLDIERS. PRC MEMBERS WERE LIVING WELL, BUT THEIR SOLDIERS WERE NOT.

COMMENT

¶16. CHAIRMAN JAMMEH'S BRUSQUE REFUSAL TO DISCUSS THE TIMETABLE ISSUE IN THE FACE OF PRESIDENT DIOUF'S FORCEFUL VIEWS INDICATE THAT NO CONCERNED PARTY OUTSIDE THE GAMBIA HAS THE PRC'S EARS. CHAIRMAN JAMMEH'S EAGERNESS TO BELIEVE THAT THE WORLD BANK DOES NOT CARE ABOUT THE GAMBIA'S REFUSAL TO MOVE TOWARD DEMOCRACY OR ITS HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD UNDERSCORES HIS BELIEF THAT WITHDRAWAL OF THE GAMBIA'S TRADITIONAL DONORS DOES NOT MATTER.

¶17. SHC KEBBE IS ALIVE TO SHIFTING POLITICAL CURRENTS IN THE GAMBIA AND HIS ANALYSES ARE INFORMED BY LONG EXPERIENCE IN THE REGION. HIS WORRY REGARDING RISKS TO WHICH FINMIN DABO IS NOW EXPOSED SUGGEST THAT THE PRC'S PURGES ARE LIKELY TO EXTEND TO ITS OWN CABINET FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE DETENTIONS OF CPTS SARR AND CHAM IN THE WEEK FOLLOWING THE COUP.

¶18. SHC'S BELIEF THAT PRC MEMBERS WHO REMAIN POWERFUL ARE BICKERING AND SELF-ABSORBED MAY PREFIGURE A DANGEROUS PERIOD OF PALACE INTRIGUE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. REGARDS.

WINTER